

SCIENTIA FORMALITATUM

THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW DISCIPLINE IN THE RENAISSANCE

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Abstract: The Formalist tradition in late-scholastic philosophy has gone unnoticed in standard historiography. This article's overall objective is to add the Formalist tradition to what we know about Renaissance philosophy. I first show how the Formalist tradition was born out of some innovative considerations of hierarchies of distinctions in the wake of the Franciscan John Duns Scotus's teaching on the formal distinction in the beginning of the fourteenth century (especially Francis of Meyronnes's model of four distinctions and Petrus Thomae's more elaborate doctrine of seven kinds of distinctions). I then trace how Formalist literature developed from being an exclusively Franciscan affair to becoming a much more widespread phenomenon. Thus, from the decades up to 1500 and onwards, authors from various late-scholastic schools (Thomism, Lullism, Averroism, and others) produced Formalist literature, i.e., treatises on multiple kinds of distinctions. I highlight particularly how one Franciscan philosopher of the sixteenth century, Jean Du Douet, proposed to view the Formalist preoccupation with distinctions as a discipline in its own right, a proper *scientia formalitatum*. I finally argue that while this proposal met with dismissive reactions, Du Douet's idea does in fact reflect the role Formalism played in the scholastic curriculum in the late sixteenth century, at least in Franciscan milieus.

Keywords: Scotism; Renaissance philosophy; history of metaphysics; scholastic metaphysics; scholastic traditions; formal distinction.

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Introduction

The genre of the so-called *Formalist treatises* (*Tractatus formalitatum*, *Formalitates* etc.) flourished throughout the Renaissance. It originated in the early fourteenth century, when Franciscans under the influence of John Duns Scotus (1265/66–1308), himself a Franciscan, started writing short treatises or otherwise engaged in discussions about various kinds of distinctions, among them Scotus's famous *formal distinction*, which then gave name to the genre. That the Scotists cultivated this genre is fairly well known. It is less known that they kept doing so until well into the seventeenth century, and that from the end of the fifteenth century other school traditions joined them. In addition to the Scotist treatises, we thus have a fairly large number of treatises on the theory of distinctions written by authors of Lullist, Thomist, Averroist, and still other backgrounds. Clearly, Wolfgang Hübener did not exaggerate when he, in a seminal article from 1987, called the Formalist tradition "die historisch am weitesten ausgreifende Diskursformation der neueren Metaphysikgeschichte."¹ Antonino Poppi, in a likewise seminal publication from 1966, highlighted the long continuation of the Formalist tradition as reflected in sources from (primarily) the Scotist milieu at Padua.² In spite of these efforts, and those of a few others, the Formalist tradition has not received the scholarly attention a "discourse formation" of this dimension properly deserves, and in particular this is true of that part of the tradition which stretches beyond the scope of medieval studies, i.e., the Formalist tradition of the sixteenth century and later. One intriguing aspect of the development of

1 HÜBENER 1987, 329.

2 POPPI 1966. Other important publications include BOLLIGER 2003 (documents the Formalist influence on Huldrych Zwingli, with a long chapter devoted to the Formalist tradition up to the time of Zwingli), MARRONE 2006 (shows that the Formalist tradition is in the background of Descartes's ontology), and ANDERSEN 2011 (traces the development of the Formalist doctrine of seven distinctions until the eighteenth century). I shall refer to further research literature in the course of this article.

this literature in the sixteenth century was that the question was raised, by the Breton Franciscan Jean Du Douet (fl. 1570s–1580s), whether or not this literature in fact constitutes a discipline of its own, a *scientia formalitatum*. Du Douet thinks that it does. Although his proposal was met with scepticism, it bespeaks the fact that the vast literature on formalities and distinctions does seem to have *de facto* assumed the character of a discipline of its own, with its own textbooks and place in the scholastic curriculum.

The rise of a new discipline needs to be a part of what we know about Renaissance philosophy. To advance this objective, I shall proceed in four steps. I shall first provide an impression of what the Formalist literature, from its beginnings in the fourteenth century, was about; in a second step, I shall show how widespread it came to be during the Renaissance; thirdly, I shall discuss in some detail Jean Du Douet’s innovative idea of a separate *scientia formalitatum*; I shall then, fourthly, consider the criticism levelled against Du Douet’s proposal by some later authors and contrast this criticism with some evidence that the Formalist tradition indeed did constitute a discipline of its own.

1. The Beginnings of the Formalist Tradition

Were it not for Duns Scotus’s assumption of a special “formal distinction,” there would hardly have been such a thing as the Formalist tradition. It would be wrong, though, to believe that the Formalist literature is only, or even primarily, concerned with Scotus’s distinction. Therefore, without at this time entering into any subtleties of Scotus’s thought on distinctions and how it evolved over time, suffice it to recall that Scotus introduced the formal distinction into metaphysics, psychology, and theology. It applies, e.g.,

between genus and species, the powers of the soul, and the divine perfections. At the risk of oversimplification, we may say that, according to Scotus, the formal distinction is not one that is projected onto reality by an intellect, i.e., it is not a rational distinction; but neither does it hold between real things, i.e., it is not a real distinction either. It is rather to be situated between these distinctions. It holds between real aspects, or formalities, of things. These as such do not exist separately from one another, and yet are not formally the same; an intellect can find a distinction in reality, even where there is a real identity.³

But does the formal distinction genuinely constitute a middle between the rational and the real distinction, or is it in fact reducible to one of them? This question was debated among some of Scotus's younger colleagues and followers, resulting in realist and less-realist interpretations of the formal distinction.⁴ Others chose a different approach, one that allowed for multiple kinds of distinctions each with their field of application. For the Formalist tradition, this step may be said to be even more important than Scotus's original doctrine. The French Franciscan Francis of Meyronnes (1285–1328), one of Duns Scotus's immediate students at Paris, worked out a list of four kinds of distinctions that may be applied on various levels of reality: *distinctio essentialis*, *distinctio realis*, *distinctio formalis*, *distinctio modalis*. According to Meyronnes, there is a hierarchical order among these distinctions. The essen-

3 In lieu of many other publications on Scotus's formal distinction, see the succinct treatment in NOONE 2009, 129–134. For the development of Scotus's thought on this distinction, see DUMONT 2005. Scotus's latest piece of writing on the subject has been edited under the title *Quaestio de formalitatibus*; see EMERY, SMITH 2014. Although this *quaestio* clearly sparked debate in the early fourteenth century, it did not yet (contrary to what its title may lead some readers to expect) provide a model for later Formalist literature.

4 For various early, partially contemporaneous, interpretations of the formal distinction, see DUMONT 2005, 10–13, and NOONE 2009, 134–148. Regarding the special case of William of Alnwick, who reacted to Scotus's late *quaestio* on the formal distinction, see VAN DEN BERCKEN 2021.

tial distinction has the widest scope, since it holds between widely distinct items, such as God and creatures, which each possesses their own essence and existence. The real distinction rather holds between items that have one single essence in common but are otherwise distinct (this applies to the Trinity, where the Father and the Son participate in one and the same essence). The formal distinction holds between quiddities of things (such as man and donkey) that have one genus in common (living being). The modal distinction covers the narrowest scope, since it holds between a quiddity and its intrinsic modes.⁵

This idea of a hierarchy of distinctions was worked out in much greater detail by another early Scotist, the Galician Franciscan Petrus Thomae († 1340), who taught in the Franciscan *Studium* of Barcelona.⁶ Peter discussed distinctions in several works, including one long treatise (called *De modis distinctionum*) and a short one (with varying titles) dedicated to just this topic.⁷ The short treatise proved immensely influential and may be seen as the first Formalist treatise, albeit in competition with an excerpt from one of Meyronnes's commentaries on the *Sentences* (the *Ab oriente* version, dist. 8), which circulated in manuscript under the title of a treatise on formalities.⁸ Peter's short treatise is divided into a general presentation of various kinds of distinctions and a special consideration of how these distinctions apply to Aristotle's ten

5 FRANCISCUS DE MAYRONIS 1520, *Conflatus*, d. 8, q. 1, 43vb. For a more detailed treatment, see ANDERSEN 2011, 89–93. The examples given by Meyronnes at this place obscure the theological importance of the formal distinction in his thought. See MÖHLE 2007, 74–113, with references to further literature.

6 For his life and works, see SMITH 2012. For his general doctrine of distinctions, see the classical study BRIDGES 1959.

7 This short treatise has come down to us in two different versions, both of which are available in modern editions (PETRUS THOMAE 2000 and 2011). Regarding the intricate problem of the relationship between the two versions, see ANDERSEN 2011, 47–81. Parts of the longer treatise were inserted into Peter's *Quodlibetal Questions* (PETRUS THOMAE 1957, qq. 6 and 7); see ANDERSEN 2011, 43.

8 See HÜBENER 1987, 334.

categories. Peter presents no less than seven kinds of distinctions: *distinctio rationis*, *distinctio ex natura rei*, *distinctio formalis*, *distinctio realis*, *distinctio essentialis*, *distinctio se totis subiective*, *distinctio se totis obiective*.⁹ He adds that these distinctions correspond with as many kinds of identities.¹⁰ He invests considerable effort into explaining the hierarchical order among the distinctions. To put it briefly, the order among distinctions is the reverse of that of identities, so that the strongest kind of identity corresponds with the weakest kind of distinction and vice versa. The intermediary levels are ordered accordingly. The “totally objective distinction” implies all the other kinds of distinction, whereas the “totally subjective distinction” implies all the others except the “totally objective” one.¹¹

Peter Thomae’s doctrine of distinctions contains an entire Scotist ontology. His “totally objective distinction” may be emphasised as particularly interesting. Peter, drawing on one key motif in Duns Scotus’s metaphysics, describes it as holding between items from which “one real univocal concept” cannot be abstracted. This real univocal concept corresponds with what Peter in other works calls “objective being.”¹² There is a “totally objective distinction” between items that do not have objective being in common; and correspondingly, there is objective identity between such items that do have objective being in common, such as God and creatures. Peter only mentions “indi-

9 PETRUS THOMAE 2011, nn. 2–4, 286; cf. PETRUS THOMAE 2000, 296.

10 PETRUS THOMAE 2011, n. 35, 310: “[P]rimum corollarium quod quotiens dicitur distinctio totiens et identitas.” Cf. PETRUS THOMAE 2000, 302.

11 PETRUS THOMAE 2011, nn. 37–38, 312: “Secundum corollarium est quod praedicti aliter se inferunt affirmative, aliter negative, aliter quando accipiuntur cum distinctione, et aliter quando cum identitate. Circa quod est sciendum primo, quod primo, quando determinant distinctionem, sic se habent, quod quaecumque se totis obiective distinguuntur, omnibus modis aliis distinguuntur et sic de omnibus aliis modis distinctionum respectu aliorum praecedentium. Quaecumque enim distinguuntur subiective, distinguuntur essentialiter, realiter, formaliter et ratione et sic de aliis, non autem e contrario.” Cf. PETRUS THOMAE 2000, 302–303.

12 See, e.g., PETRUS THOMAE 2015, q. 7, art. 3, 152, and PETRUS THOMAE 2018, q. 11, art. 3, 302.

vidual and formal differences” as examples of items that lie outside of objective being and hence can be distinguished objectively from the items they qualify.¹³ This makes Peter’s objective distinction similar to the modal distinction proposed by Francis of Meyronnes (whose intrinsic modes exactly have the function of qualifying a quiddity). Peter, however, did not explicitly mention modes at this place, and so some writers in the Formalist tradition add the modal distinction to the list of Peter Thomae’s seven distinctions, or else subsume it under his *distinctio ex natura rei*.¹⁴ The later Formalist literature is basically occupied with spelling out the ontology implied by Francis of Meyronnes’s and Petrus Thomae’s lists of distinctions.

2. The Development and Reception of the Formalist Tradition

Though the early development of the Formalist tradition in the wake of Petrus Thomae and Francis of Meyronnes is murky, it seems safe to assume that a genuine tradition must have taken form during the course of the fourteenth century. Treatises on kinds of distinctions, often by unnamed authors, began to flourish.¹⁵ The material from the fifteenth century (and later) is abundant.

13 PETRUS THOMAE 2011, n. 34, 310: “[I]lla distinguuntur se totis obiective, quae non conveniunt in aliqua una realitate seu ratione quidditativa vel a quibus non potest abstrahi aliquis conceptus univocus realis seu propriae rationis, sicut sunt differentiae formales et individuales et illa quae habent conceptum quidditativum et qualitativum, sicut ens et bonum.” Cf. PETRUS THOMAE 2000, 302.

14 For a discussion of this problematic, see ANDERSEN 2011, 171–177. John Foxal (Anglicus) is an example of an author from the fifteenth century who adds Meyronnes’s modal distinction to Petrus Thomae’s septenary; see his *Tractatus de formalitatibus*: Ms. Angelica 563, 49r–81v: 49r, explicitly referencing both authors. The authorship of this treatise has been settled in SMITH, CROESDIJK 2016, 337–338, 342.

15 I am grateful to Garrett R. Smith for sharing his inventory of this literature with me. As per February 2024, the inventory contains, besides treatises by known authors, no less than 18 different anonymous Formalist treatises, all preserved in manuscript (some of them in several manuscripts), from – as it seems – either the later fourteenth or the fifteenth century. The famous *Formalitates secundum doctrinam Francisci Maironis* (ANONYMOUS 1490: 93ra–109vb in a volume with texts by Antonius Andreae and Francis of Meyronnes; two later prints in 1517 and 1520) is not included; it may be safely as-

The following survey is bound to be incomplete; the examples given, though, do convey an accurate impression of how the Formalist tradition developed.¹⁶ Giuliano Zardino di Lodi, Nicolai Lakmann, and Heinrich of Werl produced treatises on distinctions that have been edited in the twentieth century. They interestingly represent different positions within the Formalist tradition: Giuliano discusses Petrus Thomae's seven distinctions plus the modal one (explicitly referencing both Petrus Thomae and Francis of Meyronnes),¹⁷ Lakmann may be seen as a "Mayronist" (discussing Meyronnes's four distinctions plus the rational distinction while displaying particular interest in the modal distinction),¹⁸ and Heinrich rather experiments with his own alternative nomenclature and arrangement of the distinctions (*distinctio rationis subiective, distinctio rationis obiective, distinctio ex natura rei modalis, distinctio ex natura rei formalis, distinctio modalis realis, distinctio modalis non realis*).¹⁹ There are also examples of Formalist treatises that simply stick with Petrus Thomae's septenary of distinctions. This is the case with the Formalist treatise (extant in just one manuscript dated 1440) composed by Franciscus de

sumed it was compiled from various sources only in order to be printed. See HÜBENER 1987, 332.

16 HÜBENER 1987, 331, estimates that no less than 90 different editions of Formalist literature were printed from 1475 until the end of the seventeenth century. The high number is owed to the fact that many treatises had several printed editions. Hübener did not publish his list of printed editions. I am grateful to Stephan Meier-Oeser for granting me access to Hübener's (1934–2007) unpublished catalogue ("Formalitates (Drucke, chronologisch)"), produced presumably around the time when he worked on his 1987 article. The four-pages list comprises 78 chronologically ordered entries in typescript and some handwritten additions (thus at least approximating the number 90). The following sketch of the development of the Formalist tradition is based on my own work-in-progress catalogue of printed Formalist literature.

17 IULIANUS DE LAUDE 1966 (manuscript dated 1481). For a discussion of Giuliano's treatise, see POPPI 1966, 668–671.

18 LAKMANN 1961. For a discussion of his approach to distinctions, see BOLLIGER 2003, 305–310.

19 HENRICUS DE WERLA 1954, 413. For a discussion of his approach to distinctions, see BOLLIGER 2003, 304–305.

Pertusa, a Franciscan from Valencia.²⁰ This is also the case with the *Tractatus distinctionum* written by one of the Vienna university's first professors, Johannes Meyger, in the early days of the university, i.e., in the 1380s; remarkably, this text was picked up and printed one hundred years later (in 1482), a fact that bespeaks the great importance of this literature in the Renaissance.²¹ To judge from their many printed editions, Nicolas d'Orbelles's Scotist commentaries on Aristotle were influential; he did not write a separate Formalist treatise, but instead incorporated a long discussion of Petrus Thomae's seven distinctions into his work on Aristotelian natural philosophy.²²

D'Orbelles was, at least for some time, active in Paris, and his discussion of distinctions may form some of the background for other important Parisian writings on distinctions. In particular, two treatises were produced at Paris that came to be enormously influential, one of which, the *Formalitates moderniores* by Antoine Sirect (Padua and Bologna 1484), largely affirms the doctrine of the seven distinctions, but notably rejects the idea that all the distinctions can be inferred from (or are inclosed in) one distinction, thus implicitly discarding the very systematicity of Petrus Thomae's original doctrine.²³ Another remarkable feature of Sirect's treatise is that he does not only focus on the seven distinctions, but also includes a long introductory explanation of key metaphysical concepts, structured as a presentation of the divisions of being (*divisiones entis*).²⁴ Sirect finally presents no less than twelve arguments for

20 *Formalitates*: Ms. Tortosa 153, 3v–9r.

21 MEYGER 1482. On Meyger and his treatise, see SHANK 1988, 38, 56, 116, and the more detailed study in MACHADO FORTHCOMING.

22 NICOLAUS DE ORBELLIS 1485, *In Phys.*, lib. I, 16ra–19vb. See ANDERSEN 2011, 217–223. D'Orbelles's section on distinctions was also incorporated into a Formalist treatise, albeit along with foreign material, rendering incoherent the doctrine presented. This treatise has been edited from two manuscripts in SOUSEDÍK 2011; for a discussion of its authorship, see KNEBEL 2012, 127–128.

23 SIRECTUS 1484, art. 3, pars 2, 19r–v. For discussion of Sirect's approach to the distinctions, see ANDERSEN FORTHCOMING.

24 SIRECTUS 1484, art. 1, 2v–6r, discusses the following eleven divisions of being: *ens reale* –

the formal distinction, more specifically for not reducing the formal to the real distinction.²⁵ The other Parisian treatise from this period, Étienne Brulefer's *Formalitates in doctrinam Scoti* (Paris ca. 1480), goes in the opposite direction and seeks to reduce the number of distinctions (though does not reduce the formal to the real distinction either). Brulefer applies the principle of parsimony (known as Ockham's razor) that "no plurality should be assumed without necessity" to the distinctions, concluding that since most of the distinctions may be reduced to other ones, there is no need to assume seven different kinds. Besides the purely rational distinction, there are only two kinds, namely a real and a formal distinction.²⁶ A similar criticism had already been articulated by Jean Gerson in his *Centilogium de conceptibus* (1424).²⁷ Brulefer's

ens rationis; ens quantum – ens non quantum; ens finitum – ens infinitum; ens absolutum – ens respectivum; substantia – accidens; res de ratur, ratur – res a reor, reris; ens transcendens – ens transcendentissime sumptum; ens simpliciter – ens secundum quid; ens simplex – ens compositum; ens necessarium – ens contingens; ens independens – ens dependens. See ANDERSEN 2016, 623–625. A similar structure, with an introductory section on the divisions of being and then a main section on the seven distinctions, is also found in ZERBIUS 1482 (11 divisions), ANONYMOUS 1490 (just three divisions), PETRUS DE CASTROVOL CA. 1496 (13 divisions). This last work is said to have been composed ("compilavit") in 1468, but appears to have been printed much later; see the entry in ISTC, URL: <https://data.cerl.org/istc/ic00254500> (accessed 19 March 2024).

25 SIRECTUS 1484, 1r–2r (presentation of 12 arguments for reducing the formal to the real distinction) and 19v–20v (Sirect's reply to the 12 arguments); the list of arguments is at least partially found already in the anonymous material of the previous tradition.

26 BURLIFER CA. 1485–1490, 10v: "[C]um pluralitas non sit ponenda sine necessitate, et non appareat aliqua necessitas multiplicandi distinctiones quae sunt praecedentes intellectum nisi in distinctionem formalem et distinctionem realem sequitur quod non sunt necessario ponendae aliae distinctiones condistinctae proprie et per se et aliae ab istis duabus." For the dating of the print here quoted, see the entry in ISTC, URL: <https://data.cerl.org/istc/ib01220400> (accessed 19 March 2024). Brulefer later reworked his short treatise on the distinctions and additionally authored a much longer auto-commentary on the short treatise; see BURLIFER 1501. For details, see ANDERSEN FORTHCOMING (with references to further literature). PETRUS FERMOSELLUS 1555 closely follows Brulefer's reductive approach; he, too, cites the principle of parsimony (*ibid.*, 8r); he nevertheless also incorporates elements from Sirect, namely his discussion of the 12 arguments for the formal distinction (*ibid.*, 8r–12v). Fermosellus thus combines Brulefer's reductive approach with Sirect's position on the formal distinction.

27 GERSON 1973, n. 93, 515. ANDERSEN 2011, 179–181. BOLLIGER 2003, 329 and 338–352 strongly emphasises Gerson's influence on Brulefer.

aim was to return to the slimmer economy of distinctions found in Duns Scotus's own works. Many critics of the seven distinctions followed this approach. Sirect's treatise, however, also was quite successful. It soon became the object of a special commentary literature; its author came to be known as the Master of Formalities (*Magister formalitatum*). Both Brulefer and Sirect referred to the earlier tradition using the anonymous label *formalistae* (or *formalizantes*). In the subsequent tradition, these two authors were seen as the leading authorities on the subject.²⁸ By contrast, Petrus Thomae was almost completely forgotten and Meyronnes mostly remembered just for his modal distinction. Until the beginning of the seventeenth century, Sirect's and Brulefer's works were often reprinted, and often together in one volume with additional material by other authors.

At Padua and Bologna, there was a keen interest in this kind of literature. Thanks to Antonino Poppi's study mentioned in the introduction to this article, the development at Padua is fairly well known. There, the Franciscan master Antonio Trombetta wrote a commentary on Sirect's treatise, while his confrere Maurice of Port wrote a short summary of the doctrine of the seven distinctions that was often included in printed volumes with other Formalist treatises.²⁹ At Bologna, the eclectic metaphysician Gabriele Zerbi had already, before the publication of Sirect's treatise, published a *Quaestio de pluralitate distinctionum* as an appendix to his *Quaestiones metaphysicae* (Bologna 1482).³⁰ In the 1490s, the reader of logic at the university, Oliviero Jonto, wrote a substantial and critical *Libellus de distinctionum pluralitate* (Bologna 1494), while

28 For their influence on the later tradition, see below; for further details, see ANDERSEN FORTHCOMING.

29 Both of these writings are contained (along with Sirectus's treatise and the shorter of Brulefer's treatises) in TROMBETTA 1502, being a typical example of a collective volume containing Formalist literature. Trombetta's own treatise was first printed in Venice 1493.

30 ZERBIUS 1482. See POPPI 1966, 674–680.

his own former teacher Stephanus de Flandria discussed the seven distinctions plus the modal one in his handbook of logic (Bologna 1495).³¹ It had indeed become quite normal to discuss the seven distinctions not only in treatises devoted to this special topic, but also in works treating of other matters, such as logic, physics, and theology.³² At Bologna, we also see another development: While Stephanus de Flandria was a member of the Servite Order, neither Zerbi nor Jonto were members of any religious Order. In other words, it now becomes normal for authors not affiliated with the Franciscans to discuss the seven distinctions and even write treatises about them. While there are cases of this phenomenon also in the earlier material (e.g., the above mentioned Meyger), the development in Bologna seems to testify to a new tendency. Alessandro Achillini, a well-known Bolognese eclectic Aristotelian, with Averroist leanings, had his treatise *De distinctionibus* printed in 1510.³³ Agostino da Treviso (Tarvisinus) from the Order of the Augustinians and an admirer of Giles of Rome (of the same Order) was also active in Bologna; he had his *Tractatus de formalibus et modalibus distinctionibus* printed in 1524.³⁴ His confrere from Padua Giovanni Benedetto Moncetti, likewise an admirer of Giles of Rome, had already had his *Quaestio aurea de distinctione rationis*, a Formalist treatise with special focus on the rational distinction, printed in 1509 (probably at Venice).³⁵

31 JONTUS 1491; STEPHANUS DE FLANDRIA 1495, 30ra–b.

32 For other examples, see ANDERSEN 2011, 207–215 and 383 (Guillaume Vaurouillon), 223–225 (Agostino da Ferrara), 227–237 and 384–385 (Pierre Tartaret), and 241 (various authors).

33 ACHILLINI 1510. See MATSEN 1974, 32.

34 TARVISINUS 1524. His Aegidian approach to the distinctions was still being discussed in the seventeenth century (by Bartolomeo Amico, Bartolomeo Mastri, and some Scotists influenced by Mastri); see ANDERSEN 2016, 687–688.

35 MONCETTUS 1509. The full title of the treatise reveals that the author is particularly interested in the real foundation of the rational distinction – and that his text contains a critical comparison between Duns Scotus and Giles of Rome: *Quaestio aurea de distinctione rationis quid sit, et an semper supponat aliquid distinctum ex natura rei, non ut sensit Scotus, immo ex hoc videbitur Scotum non bene posuisse, sed solum ut descripsit D. Egidius Romanus.*

A number of Thomists, all of them Dominicans, followed suit. The Bolognese Thomist Bartolomeo Manzoli had his *Formalitates secundum viam Sancti Thome* printed in 1518, and the more well-known Thomist Chrysostomo Javelli, likewise active in Bologna, discussed the seven distinctions in one section of his *Quaestiones* on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* that he completed in 1532. The phenomenon of Thomists engaging with the Formalist tradition was not restricted to Bologna. Two prominent examples deserve to be mentioned: Andreas Karlstadt (in his youth a Dominican) had his *Distinctiones Thomistarum* printed at Wittenberg in 1508, and a similar work by the Neapolitan Thomist Mattia Gibboni from Aquara (Aquarius) was posthumously printed at Naples in 1605.³⁶ Notably, these Thomists did not primarily write their treatises in order to refute Scotus or the doctrine of seven distinctions so popular among the Scotists, but rather used the Scotist discussions as a template for developing lists of distinctions that they thought were more adequate for the understanding of Aquinas. This kind of Thomist interest in distinction theory has gone unnoticed in historiography, and may hence come as a surprise. However, it may be even more surprising to some historians of philosophy that authors affiliated with the Lullist tradition too wrote treatises on distinctions and / or discussed the seven distinctions plus additional distinctions in their works on Lullist philosophy. The most prominent example is Pere Daguí (Degui), who was the first professor in the Lullist *studium* on Mallorca and author of two treatises on distinctions (available in modern edi-

See also the disposition of the text, 2r: "In ista quaestione videbimus primo quid sit distinctio rationis, et an semper supponat aliqua esse distincta ex natura rei. Secundo videbimus qualiter Scotus cum suis imitatoribus non bene et complete posuerunt talem distinctionem ex natura rei, et ut sic tota destruetur positio sua de attributis divinis. Tertio adducemus dubia contra positionem nostram et solutiones ad illa." I warmly thank Alberto Casadei for turning my attention to this treatise.

³⁶ KARLSTADT 1508; MANZOLUS 1518; JAVELLUS 1568, *Super duodecim Metaphysices*, lib. XII, q. 19, 892a–b; AQUARIUS 1605. See ANDERSEN 2023, 160–164, with discussion of the Thomist works mentioned here.

tions), as well as a long section on distinctions in his work on metaphysics.³⁷ His student Jaume Janer (Ianuarius), a Cistercian who himself became the leader of a Lullist school in Valencia, composed one brief treatise on distinctions and, like his teacher, included long sections on this subject in his two works on metaphysics.³⁸ We find the same phenomenon in other Lullist works of the period.³⁹ Another highly interesting example of the reception of Formalist literature in the Crown of Aragon in the late fifteenth century is the Jewish philosopher Eli Habilo, who not only translated Scotist literature into Hebrew, but also, in the introduction to one of these translations, gave his own account of Petrus Thomae's seven distinctions.⁴⁰

Some seventeenth-century Italian Jesuits also contributed to Formalist literature. Bartolomeo Amico's *Tractatio de variis formalitatum et distinctionum generibus dilucida et exacta* (Naples 1638) and Giovanni Riccioli's *De distinctionibus entium in Deo et in creaturis tractatus philosophicus ac theologicus* (Bologna 1669) are examples.⁴¹ While Amico offered a splendid historical over-

37 DEGUI 1489 (*Opus divinum*) and 2018 (containing his *Tractatus formalitatum brevis* and his *Tractatus de differentia*). For a discussion of Dagui's relationship to the Formalist tradition, see ANDERSEN, RAMIS BARCELÓ 2018, 37–65.

38 IANUARIUS 1492 (*Ingressus facilis*) and 1506 (*Ars metaphisicalis*). ANDERSEN 2022, 235–239 contains Janer's *Tractatulus de distinctionibus omnium rerum* from 1491. For more detailed references and a discussion of Janer's relationship to the Formalist tradition, see ANDERSEN, RAMIS BARCELÓ 2022, 186–194.

39 See ANDERSEN, RAMIS BARCELÓ 2022, 194–201 (discusses Bernard de Lavinheta, Valerio Valier, Francesc Marçal and others). For Bernard de Lavinheta, see in particular ANDERSEN, RAMIS BARCELÓ 2018, 55–57 and 201–205.

40 Eli Habilo's remarkable interest in Formalism has received due attention. See ZONTA 2006, 165–208 (see especially the English paraphrase of his discussion of distinctions at 178–199), ANDERSEN 2011, 241–253, BAUM 2020, 544–554 (Baum furthermore hypothesizes that interest in Scoto-Lullism might have entered into Jewish circles toward the end of the fifteenth century; see *ibid.*, 554–557).

41 AMICUS 1638; RICCIOLUS 1669. For Amico's treatise, see ANDERSEN 2011, 241, and ANDERSEN 2016, 409–411, 686, 688, 695, 711, 749. Riccioli's connection with the Formalist tradition is less obvious; in his unpaginated introductory section called "*Auctores de distinctionibus consulti*," he does, though, supply an impressive list of Formalist authors as well as contemporaneous Scotists; he likewise refers to a long list of Jesuit treatments of distinctions.

view of the discussion from Sirect until his own time, Riccioli, who is better known for his achievements in astronomy, instead gave a more systematic treatment of the subject of distinctions. It should be noted, however, that these two authors are exceptions from the rule that the genre of Formalist literature was generally not cultivated by Jesuits; their works on metaphysics, though, usually contained sections on various kinds of distinctions.⁴² The same goes for the *Schulmetaphysik* produced in Early Modern Protestant and Reformed milieus.⁴³ Among the Franciscans themselves, Formalist treatises continued to be produced and printed at least until the 1660s.⁴⁴ The Capuchins too produced Formalist literature, both in the sixteenth and in the

42 For a consideration of the *locus* of discussions of distinctions (usually after the treatment of unity as a *passio entis*) in the Jesuit *Cursus* literature, see ANDERSEN 2016, 678 (considers Francisco Suárez, Pedro Hurtado de Mendoza, Rodrigo Arriaga, and Francisco Oviedo; only the latter inserts his discussion of distinctions after his treatment of all the transcendentals).

43 See BARTHOLIN 1629, 206–215. Caspar Bartholin is an important example, because his manual of metaphysics was the most often printed textbook of this discipline in Protestant Europe (according to LEINSLE 1985, 288). Following upon his treatment of sameness and difference, he presents multiple kinds of distinctions: *distinctio rationis ratiocinantis*, *distinctio rationis ratiocinatae*, *distinctio realis*, *distinctio formalis*, *distinctio essentialis*, *distinctio causalis*, *distinctio subiectiva*, *distinctio accidentalis*, *distinctio modalis simplex*, *distinctio modalis comparata*. Though these distinctions derive from various sources, the Formalist tradition still seems to lie in the distant background of this preoccupation with kinds of distinctions. Bartholin's textbook first appeared in 1608; later editions have a fuller, albeit not very extensive, account of distinctions. In the Reformed camp, ALSTED 1610, 27–31, and ALSTED 1613, 232–247, covers all of the Formalist distinctions and some additional distinctions. BOLLIGER 2003, 424–459, discusses Formalist influences on Huldrych Zwingli's theology. Further examples from Protestant and Reformed milieus are discussed in MÜLLER FORTHCOMING.

44 See FABER FAVENTINUS 1602; ARRETINUS 1606; PICELLIUS 1655; BORDONUS 1662. More on the first two of these treatises below. Note that I am not here considering the extensive dissertation literature from the period, i.e., the kind of literature in which a *praeses* typically presented his view on a given topic which his students then, as their final exam, had to explain in public. In this literature too, distinctions were up for discussion. For just one example, see CATRIN (*praeses*) 1698. However, if this example is representative, one will, in this kind of literature, rather find discussions of the formal distinction vis-à-vis contemporary criticism than a direct engagement with the old Formalist tradition. Interestingly, CATRIN (*praeses*) 1698, *passim*, references the above mentioned Riccioli, among other Jesuits. The work also includes a critical discussion of the Jesuit doctrine of *scientia media*; see *ibid.*, 83–111.

seventeenth centuries.⁴⁵ The general tendency, though, also among the Franciscans, was that matters formerly discussed in Formalist treatises gradually became adopted into their vast *Cursus philosophici*, the preferred genre of seventeenth century scholastic philosophy.⁴⁶ At least in some Scotist *Cursus* literature, in the sections pertaining to logic or metaphysics, we still find discussions of the seven distinctions well into the eighteenth century.⁴⁷

3. *Scientia formalitatum* as a Separate Discipline: Jean Du Douet's Proposal

In all of the literature that I have mentioned, one finds detailed and subtle discussions of distinction, identity, and related metaphysical matters (intrinsic modes, kinds of predication, etc.). Surprisingly, what one rather seldom finds are reflexions on what this literature is about and what its purpose is. One might wonder whether scholastic Formalism is a part of metaphysics or

45 See PISTORIENSIS 1570; GESUALDUS DE BONONIIS 1652. Girolamo da Pistoia's (Pistoriensis) treatise is written in the form of a dialogue, a format also employed in the Formalist tradition of the fifteenth century, namely by Robertus Anglicus; see HÜBENER 1987, 330.

46 This is the case with the influential Conventual Franciscans Bartolomeo Mastri and Bonaventura Belluto, who present and discuss the seven Formalist distinctions both in their disputations on logic published as a jointly authored work and in the disputations on metaphysics authored by Mastri alone. See the detailed discussion in ANDERSEN 2016, 659–683 (referencing further seventeenth-century Scotist literature). PICH 2023, 269, argues that the long digression on distinctions in Alfonso Briceño's *Controversiae*, a vast work on Scotist theology (Madrid 1639), constitutes something like an equivalent to a Formalist treatise. Briceño was born in Santiago de Chile and later, after a sojourn in Spain, taught in the Franciscan Convent of Lima, Peru. Roberto Hofmeister Pich confirmed to me that no Formalist literature properly speaking (separate Formalist treatises) is presently known to have been produced in Latin American scholasticism; however, with the rising interest in this branch of the history of scholastic thought, Formalist literature may be found there too.

47 As shown in ANDERSEN 2011, 259–267 and 386–387 (documents Alipius Locherer's discussion of the seven distinctions in his *Clypeus philosophico-scotisticus*, published in 1740). While the genre of Formalist treatises gradually came to an end with the adoption of Formalist discussions into the Scotist *Cursus* literature, a shift away from the traditional doctrine of distinctions toward a new tendency (from Jesuit scholasticism) to discuss distinctions under the heading of mental precisions took place. For this development, see ANDERSEN 2016, 820–839.

of logic, or does it rather constitute a discipline of its own? The single most vocal author in favour of such a separate discipline was Jean Du Douet, an observant Franciscan from the Province of Touraine, Doctor Regens in the Faculty of Theology in Paris, and a Professor Ordinarius in the Grand Couvent of his order in the same city.⁴⁸ As the long title of his Formalist treatise suggests, Du Douet saw himself as an heir to an extensive tradition; his work draws on Scotus's teaching, on Sirect's Formalist treatise and Trombetta's commentary on it, as well as Brulefer's criticism of the *formalistae*: *Formalitarum Doctoris Subtilis Scoti, Antonii Sirecti, Antonii Trombettae, et Stephani Bruleferi, eximiorum Theologorum, ordinis Minorum, Monotessera in philosophiae Aristotelis et Theologiae theoricæ studiosorum gratiam adunata, ac in tres libros capitibus sectos ordine perfacili digesta*.

Du Douet's work thus bears testimony to the influence of Sirect and Brulefer on the Post-Medieval Formalist tradition. The work was printed twice, in 1579 at Paris and in 1587 at Venice. In the first edition, the work

⁴⁸I gather this information from the *titulus* of DOVETUS 1587a ("Vita Mauricii Hylareti"), unpaginated (c iii verso; Du Douet's text actually dates from 1586): "F. Ioannes Dv Dovet Armoricus Dinannicus, Ordinis D. Francisci, Almae Parisiensis Facultatis Theologiae Doctor Regens: & professor ordinarius, pio Lectori S." Du Douet was a native from Dinan in the Bretagne. At the time of the publication of his Formalist treatise, he was a bachelor of theology; see the cover page of DOVETUS 1579. As already noted by SCHMUTZ 2008, 407, the biographic sketch in SERÉNT 1914 is insufficient; it must be complemented with information from Du Douet's own writings (the two just mentioned). In recent literature, Du Douet has been treated in MARRONE 2006, 255–258 (key concepts of his ontology), SCHMUTZ 2008, 391, 401, 407, 424, 463 (his significance in the context of Parisian Scotism), and ANDERSEN 2016, 664–665 (his suggestion of a separate *scientia formalitarum*, also under investigation in this present article). SCHMUTZ, *ibid.*, 407, gives the following estimate of Du Douet's significance for the Scotist profile of the Grand Couvent of the Franciscans in Paris: "L'ouvrage de Du Douet peut être considéré comme le premier imprimé de la tradition moderne du couvent: mais au niveau du contenu, il est en fait le livre le plus en contact avec 'l'ancienne' tradition du scotisme parisien, à savoir le formalisme de la fin du XV^e siècle." This accurate observation is not affected by Schmutz's mistaken identification of a work by François Leroy as simply a new edition of Du Douet's treatise; see below. For a historical sketch of Franciscan education in Paris around the time of Du Douet, see ARMSTRONG 2004, especially 112–124.

comprises 286 octavo pages. It is structured in three books, *libelli*, the first of which introduces a series of both metaphysical and logico-epistemological key motifs from Formalist literature, the second discusses the divisions of being (as Sirect did), and the third presents Peter Thomae's seven kinds of distinctions and their corresponding kinds of identities (note that Petrus Thomae is no longer mentioned as author of this doctrine).⁴⁹ The first book clearly has an introductory function. It discusses the definitions and divisions of key concepts of this kind of literature (e.g., quiddity and intrinsic mode), the various kinds of predication employed in this literature, as well as the intellectual operations presupposed in all of philosophy. In chapters 3–5, all very brief, of this first book, Du Douet also discusses the very status of Formalism as a discipline, or indeed as a *scientia* in its own right. The entire third chapter, dealing with the “subject matter of the science of formalities” (*De subiecto scientiae formalitatum*) reads as follows:

The subject of the science of formalities is being, taken as maximally transcendent (*ens transcendentissime sumptum*), as it is common to real being and rational being under the aspect of identity and distinction, since this science teaches how to distinguish real being from rational being. And this is not hindered by the common objection that a subject of any science must be incomplex, from which it would appear to follow that being taken as maximally transcendent and under the aspect of identity and diversity is not the subject of any science. For such being, taken as maximally transcendent and under the aspect of identity and diversity, although it is indeed complex in regard to expression, is incomplex in regard to meaning, because a single incomplex concept corresponds to it in the mind. Nor does it need to bother anyone that a subject of a science is called transcendent, because this science is not only natural, but rather indeed metaphysical, since this [science] treats the divisions of being and hence is also physics, logic, and theology, and the subject of this theology is usually called God, and indeed [God] as transcending all the categories is not contained in their sphere. Perhaps you will say that something equivocal, indeed analogical, such as is being taken maximally transcendent, is not the subject of any science whatsoever, which I readily grant, if the science of formalities would only be about the transcendentals or only limited things; however, since it is about such things that are included under the categories and about such things that tran-

49 DOVETUS 1579, praefatio, 1–2.

scend them, namely beings of reason, which cannot exist without a collative act of some faculty, and about which being is said equivocally, it is not inappropriate that its subject is something equivocal.⁵⁰

The central concept in this passage is that of “being, taken as maximally transcendent,” or *ens transcendentissime sumptum*, which of course we can also translate as “supertranscendent being” – it is being in the superlative mode of its transcendence.⁵¹ This supertranscendent being is common to both “real being” (*ens reale*) and “being of reason” (*ens rationis*). The science of formalities has this broad subject matter, because it teaches how to distinguish between

50 DOVETUS 1579, lib. I, cap. 3, 17-18: “Subiectum scientiae formalitatum est ens transcendentissime sumptum, ut commune est ad ens reale & ens rationis sub ratione identitatis & distinctionis, cum doceat haec scientia, distinguere ens reale ab ente rationis. Nec obstat vulgaris obiectio, quod subiectum alicuius scientiae debet esse incomplexum, ex qua videretur sequi ens transcendentissime sumptum, & sub ratione identitatis & diversitatis, non esse subiectum scientiae alicuius. Nam tale ens transcendentissime sumptum, sub ratione identitatis & diversitatis, licet voce sit vere complexum, tamen sensu est incomplexum, quia ei respondet unicus conceptus incomplexus in mente. Neque aliquem movere debet, quod transcendens assignetur alicuius scientiae subiectum, cum haec scientia non tantum sit naturalis, utpote solummodo metaphysica, quod in ea tractentur divisiones entis, cum etiam sit Phisica, Logica, & Theologia, cuius theologiae subiectum Deus assignari solet, quamvis transcendens omnia praedicamenta in quorum ambitu non continetur. Dices forsitan, aequivocum, praesertim analogum, quale est ens transcendentissime sumptum, nullius scientiae esse subiectum, quod quidem tecum faterer, si scientia formalitatum esset solum de transcendentibus, aut solum de limitatis, sed quia est de his quae in cathgoriis includuntur, & de his quae ipsas transcendunt, imo de entibus rationis quae sine actu collativo alicuius potentiae esse non possunt, & de quibus ens aequivoce dicitur, non inconvenit eius subiectum aequivocum esse.” Instead of ‘Theologia’, the 1579 edition has ‘Tgeologa’ and the 1587 edition ‘Theologa’ (the latter edition is DOVETUS 1587b in the bibliography).

51 Notably, the presently first known use of the adjective ‘*supertranscendens*’ in order to describe the subject matter of a discipline is found in PETRUS DEGUI 2018, *Tractatus de differentia*, n. 4, 120. Daguí, one of the Scoto-Lullists mentioned above, does not speak of supertranscendent *being*, but rather says that *differentia*, the subject matter of his treatise, is supertranscendent, because it intervenes between being and non-being, and also because it is said to obtain between formalities and between the interior aspects of formalities (by which he may mean the constituents of Lullist relations, such as, in the case of being, *entificativum*, *entificabile*, and *entificare*): “[S]ubiectum eius sit supertranscendens, quod non solum inter ens et non ens ingreditur, verumetiam inter formalitates ac etiam interiora cuiuslibet formalitatis affirmatur.” There are no traces of such motifs in Du Douet’s consideration of *ens transcendentissime sumptum*, and so a direct influence from Daguí may be excluded.

the spheres of real and mental being. Although *'ens transcendentissime sumptum'* is a complex term, it has an incomplex meaning, and therefore can be the subject of a science. This science, however, does not only embrace real being and being of reason, but also, due to its treatment of the "divisions of being" (*divisiones entis*), transcendent being, i.e., God, and limited being, i.e., the created world. Supertranscendent being as such is understood as a concept spanning only real being and mental being, not (at least not immediately) divine and created being. Since it spans both real being and mental being, supertranscendent being is an equivocal concept, because mental being, which is entirely dependent on some intellectual activity, does not really qualify as being at all.⁵² For this very reason, the notion of supertranscendent being was indeed highly controversial among the Scotists.⁵³ Du Douet however simply states that the science of formalities *de facto* treats both real and mental being and hence has an equivocal concept as subject matter. It does not disturb him that the equivocal character of this concept could be seen as an obstacle to his claim that supertranscendental being has an incomplex meaning in the mind; nor does it alarm him that he is setting aside the fundamental principle, enshrined in Duns Scotus's own famous definition of univocity, that any scientific (syllogistic) reasoning must operate with univocal concepts.⁵⁴

52 The equivocal character of *ens transcendentissime sumptum* is confirmed in DOVETUS 1579, lib. II, cap. 4, 129, and lib. II, cap. 6, 131 (these chapters of the second book are devoted to the univocity of being and the division of maximally transcendent being into real being and being of reason). Du Douet's immediate source for this view is SIRECTUS 1484, art. 1, 4v. See too DUNS SCOTUS 2008, *Reportatio* I-A, d. 29, q. un., n. 9, 238: "[...] nihil sit commune univocum primae intentionis eiusdem rationis enti reali et enti rationis (quod destruit rationem entis, quia ens deminutum est [...])."

53 See KOBUSCH 1996 (Scotus and the Scotist tradition), MANDRELLA 2009 (sixteenth- and seventeenth century Scotists and others), CROSS 2023 (the early Scotist tradition).

54 DUNS SCOTUS 1954, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3, p. 1, qq. 1-2, n. 26, 18: "Et ne fiat contentio de nomine univocationis, univocum conceptum dico, qui ita est unus quod eius unitas sufficit ad contradictionem, affirmando et negando ipsum de eodem; sufficit etiam pro medio syllogistico, ut extrema unita in medio sic uno sine fallacia aequivocationis concludan-

In the passage quoted above, Du Douet touches on the relationship between his science of formalities and other disciplines that seem to be incorporated within its sphere of consideration.⁵⁵ The very title of the fourth chapter states the following: “The science of formalities is first of all metaphysics and about the subject of metaphysics” (*Scientiam formalitatum praecipue esse metaphisicam & de subiecto metaphisicae*). The text of the brief chapter explains the relationship between the science of formalities and metaphysics as follows:

Although it was said that the science of formalities is about transcendentals and limited things, real beings and [beings] of reason, one must yet know that it somehow belongs under a special [kind of] metaphysics, because it considers the divisions of being and in particular its distinctions and identities, which pertain to the contemplations of metaphysics. One must know, in regard to this metaphysics, what the subject is that in particular is considered therein. I therefore say that real being is the adequate subject of all of metaphysics, which in particular contemplates the abstract natures of things. Neither is the authority of Averroes the Commentator a hindrance, who says that God is the subject in metaphysics, because what he wants to teach is that God is the most perfect being, which is considered in metaphysics and there holds the first place according to the firstness of perfection. For since everything that is from God is finite, whereas He is infinite, it is inferred with manifest consequence that God is the most perfect of all beings, and when something draws nearer to this perfection the more perfect it is, and the more it draws back from it, it is held to be less perfect.⁵⁶

tur inter se uniri.” Du Douet fails to provide a reference to this place in his discussion of univocity in the second book of his treatise.

55 Note too that DOVETUS 1579, dedicatory letter (unpaginated, a ii v), emphasises that this science sheds light on both Christian theology and Aristotelian philosophy.

56 DOVETUS 1579, lib. I, cap. 4, 19–20: “Quanquam dictum sit scientiam formalitatum de transcendentibus esse & limitatis, entibus realibus & rationis, tamen sciendum est, ipsam quodam speciali iure metaphisicae attribui, quod divisiones entis, & eiusdem distinctiones & identitates maxime consideret, quae sunt metaphisicae contemplationis: sciendum est, quid sit ipsius metaphisicae subiectum, in eadem maxime consideratum. Dico ergo, quod ens reale est subiectum adaequatum totius metaphisicae, quae rerum naturas abstractas maxime contempletur. Nec obstat Commentatoris Averrois auctoritas, qui dicit Deum in metaphisica esse subiectum, nam ipse vult docere, Deum esse ens perfectissimum, quod in metaphisica consideretur, & in ea primum prioritate perfectionis. Cum enim omnia a Deo sint finita, ipse vero sit infinitus, manifesto infertur consequutio, Deum esse omnium entium perfectissimum, ad cuius perfectionem, quanto res

The science of formalities clearly has a special relationship to metaphysics, indeed may be regarded a special kind of metaphysics. The science of formalities considers the divisions of being as well as “its distinctions and identities,” which no doubt refer to all those kinds of distinction and identity that apply to reality and are not mere products of intellectual activity. Metaphysics, however, too considers just this, and it does so in the “highest manner” (*maxime*). Its subject matter, or “adequate subject,” is real being, which includes the abstract natures of things. Du Douet only tackles one possible objection, namely that Averroes, the authoritative commentator on Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, says that this science is in fact rather about God, i.e., not real being as such.⁵⁷ Averroes, however, according to Du Douet, should be understood to mean that metaphysics considers God as the “most perfect being” (*ens perfectissimum*) or the “most perfect of all beings” (*omnium entium perfectissimum*), presumably leaving room for a metaphysical consideration of less perfect and finite beings.

This metaphysical aspect of the science of formalities, however, does not exhaust the potential of Du Douet’s science of formalities, which at the outset was characterised as being not only about real being, but rather super-transcendental being.⁵⁸ Hence, he adds a chapter “On the subject matter of

aliqua accedit proprius, eo perfectior est, & quanto ab eo magis recedit, eo imperfectior quoque censetur.” The 1579 edition has ‘consequio’; I follow the 1587 edition’s correction to ‘consequutio.’

57 A similar view is attributed to Averroes by, among many others, the contemporaneous Paduan Scotist MALAFOSSUS 2009, n. 10, 455–456. For a discussion of Averroes’s actual, and more complex, view of the subject matter of metaphysics, see BERTOLACCI 2007, 84–96.

58 Note that at least one Formalist author was, contrary to Du Douet, content with assuming the same subject matter both for metaphysics and for Formalism; see BRIXIENSIS 1537, 3r: “Quid autem sit subiectum. Licet varie sint opinionones circa hoc. Tamen probabiliter posset teneri quod ens in quantum ens. Et si dicatur, quod hoc non potest esse, quia in ista scientia sit mentio de entibus rationis, pari ratione dicam quod etiam propter hoc non erit subiectum meta[physicae], quia ibi Aristo[teles] facit mentionem de entibus secundarum intentionum, patet. [...] Et quum hoc ibi non tollat quin sit subiectum, nec

our intellect" (*De subiecto nostri intellectus*). There, we learn that the subject matter (or better: object) of our human intellect has a wider scope than that of metaphysics:

Therefore, since this science should absolutely belong within speculation, and speculation is the genuine operation of the intellect, one should note that the object of our intellect extends farther than that of metaphysics, and it is the same as that of the [science of] formalities, i.e., being according to its widest scope and taken supertranscendentally. For the intelligible is the adequate object of our intellect, just like the visible is the adequate object of sight.⁵⁹

Thus, contrary to metaphysics, the science of formalities falls within the scope of the human mind, which extends to all things intelligible, i.e., nothing that is intelligible falls outside of the scope of the intellect. It is, however, as we now learn, one thing to speak of the *terminating* object of the intellect, and another to speak of the object that *moves* the intellect (*obiectum terminativum* vs. *motivum*):

And since it may be objected that the quiddity of a material thing is said to be the object of the intellect, one should note that the object of the intellect is two-fold: one is terminating. The intelligible is of that kind, since nothing can be cognized by the intellect, if it does not terminate it. And under this object of the intellect (which is the intelligible) are included (besides, of course, real beings) beings of reason that do not move the intellect, except through their foundation, and the fictive beings that move it by their parts (because the parts of a chimera

hic impedit." This position is similar to that proposed by Du Douet in that the object of Formalism embraces both real being and being of reason; it differs, however, from Du Douet's position, because he is clear about *metaphysics* not having such a broad (super-transcendent) object. BRIXIENSIS 1537 stands in the same tradition as Du Douet; the treatise appears to be heavily indebted to Trombetta. I have not seen any indication that Du Douet knew of this particular treatise.

59 DOVETUS 1579, lib. I, cap. 5, 20: "Cum igitur haec scientia maxime in speculatione sit posita, quae speculatio, est intellectus genuina operatio, notandum est, nostri intellectus obiectum latius patere, quam metaphisicae. Idemque esse quod formalitatum, hoc est ens in sua amplissima latitudine, & transcendentissime sumptum. Intelligibile etenim nostri intellectus est adaequatum obiectum, sicuti visibile obiectum est adaequatum visus."

can be apprehended one by one and separately from one another, although they cannot be cognized simultaneously and as united, except falsely so), such that they are included under the intelligible and may terminate an [act of an] intellect. The other object of the intellect is called moving, because it moves the intellect to its cognition, and this is the quiddity of a material thing, which indeed moves the intellect, not due to itself and per se, but accidentally (since our senses do not descend to the substance of a thing) due to the accidents that inhere in it, which affect the external senses, from which the intellect through mediation by the internal sense receives a cognition of extra-mental things. Indeed, it does not even cognize its very own [substance] without consideration of other things, from which it by way of comparison forms a notion of itself.⁶⁰

This explanation of the terminating object of the intellect is at the same time a theory of how beings of reason and fictive beings may be objects of cognition. Such beings do not directly, but only indirectly, move the intellect. Fictive beings, such as chimera, may be reduced to their real parts (e.g., a goat and a lion) that indeed are objects of the external senses and may move the intellect after having been processed by the internal sense. Taken as such, fictive beings and beings of reason only terminate the intellect, which is to say that they constitute the end products of a cognitive process rather than are the factors driving the process. This notion of a terminating object is the one that is relevant for a comparison of the scope of human cognition with that of the

60 DOVETUS 1579, lib. I, cap. 5, 20–21: “At vero quoniam obiici poterit, quidditatem rei materialis, dici obiectum intellectus. Notandum est duplex esse obiectum intellectus, unum terminativum, cuiusmodi est intelligibile, cum nihil possit cognosci ab intellectu, nisi ipsum terminet. Et sub hoc intellectus obiecto (quod est intelligibile) comprehendo entia rationis (a fortiori realia) quae non movent intellectum, nisi in suo fundamento, & fictitia, quae in suis partibus movent (cum possint apprehendi partes Chimaerae, seorsim, & a se invicem separatae, quamvis non possint intelligi nisi falso simul unitae) sicque sub intelligibili comprehenduntur, & intellectum terminare possunt. Alterum nostri intellectus obiectum, dicitur motivum, quod ipsum moveat intellectum ad sui cognitionem, & illud est quidditas rei materialis: quae intellectum quidem movet, non ratione sui & per se, sed per accidens (cum sensus nostri non se profundent usque ad substantiam rei) ratione accidentium ipsi inherentium, quae sensus afficiunt externos, a quibus intellectus mediantibus sensibus internis accipit cognitionem rerum ad extra: imo suiipsius cum seipsum non cognoscat sine aliorum consideratione, a quibus comparative suiipsius notitiam format.” The 1579 edition has ‘profundet’; I follow the 1587 edition’s correction to ‘profudent.’

science of formalities. Notably, in the quoted passage Du Douet takes only fictive beings as proper beings of reason. Second intentions are not included under this category. Elsewhere, he says that second intentions have being in (or are owing to) first intentions and exist as long as these are conceived.⁶¹ It seems that Du Douet would say that second intentions, while not moving the intellect themselves, are founded in first intentions, and these do move the intellect. Abstract items (or second intentions), such as genus and species, are properly speaking *formalitates*.⁶²

In the above passage, Du Douet draws on the early Scotist Antonius Andreae's definition of what a 'formality' is. According to Antonius, "A formality is an objective *ratio* apprehended by the intellect in the nature of the thing; it must not always move the intellect, as long as it can terminate the act of the intellect."⁶³ In much Formalist literature, we find this definition reiterated without any mention of its origin.⁶⁴ In this regard, Du Douet is not an exception. Although he does not mention Antonius Andreae, in fact the latter's

61 DOVETUS 1579, lib. I, cap. 1, 8: "[...] secundae intentiones, quae tandiu habent esse quandiu in primis intelliguntur."

62 See DOVETUS 1579, lib. I, cap. 1, 5–6.

63 ANTONIUS ANDREAEE 1477, lib. 4, q. 2, 37ra: "Formalitas est ratio obiectalis in re apprehensa ab intellectu ex natura rei, quam non oportet semper movere intellectum dummodo actum intellectus possit terminare." Cf. POPPI 1966, 619; BOLLIGER 2003, 337; ANDERSEN 2016, 725–726 (considering too an alternative definition given by Francis of Meyronnes also circulating among the Formalists). The distinction between the moving and the terminating object of the intellect too played an important role in Nicolaus Bonetus's doctrine of the subject matter of metaphysics; see MANDRELLA 2008, 185–187. It does not seem that Bonetus influenced Formalist discussions of the concept of 'formality.' Bonetus does, though, play an important part in the Formalist tradition; the third book of his compendium of metaphysics was printed as a separate Formalist treatise, albeit under the wrong name of Antonius Andreae; see BONETUS 1475 (ff. 52ra–59vb in a volume with Antonius Andreae's *De tribus principiis* and Thomas Aquinas's *De ente et essentia*). BOLLIGER 2003, 282–283, refers to a further print of the third book from 1489 and a manuscript containing the third book under the title "Formalitates." This may all be seen as evidence that Bonet was indeed read as a Formalist. See further DUBA FORTHCOMING.

64 See, e.g., NICOLAUS DE ORBELLIS 1485, *In Phys.*, lib. I, 17rb; IULIANUS DE LAUDE 1966, art. 1, 780; SIRECTUS 1484, art. 2, art. part. 2, 7v; BURLIFER 1501, commentary on his short treatise, pars 3, 31rb (criticises this definition).

definition is of central importance to him. His entire first chapter which precedes his chapters on the subject matter and status of a separate *scientia formalitatum* is devoted to the concept ‘formality’ (*De diffinitione formalitatis & multiplici acceptione nominis formalitatis*). The chapter is in fact nothing other than an original explication of Antonius Andreae’s definition. Du Douet opens the chapter with a statement that a formality is an objective *ratio* under which some *res* may be conceived; he later explains that such a formality must not “move the intellect” as long as it can “terminate” it; all things that are *per se* conceivable are formalities (care is taken to exclude the intrinsic modes from the category of *formalitas*, since they can only be conceived when joined to the things they modify, and thus not *per se*); a formality is called an ‘objective *ratio*’ because it, along with everything that is *per se* conceivable, is an object grasped by the acts of the reasoning faculty of the soul; the distinction between moving and terminating the intellect is added to the definition of ‘formality,’ because there are two kinds of objective *rationes*, one that is moving and another that is terminating.⁶⁵ The latter distinction, of course, is the

65 DOVETUS 1579, lib. I, cap. 1, 3 (opening line of the chapter): “Formalitas est ratio obiectiva, sub qua una quaeque res, ex natura rei, concipi potest.” *Ibid.*, 5: “Formalitas est aliquid repertum in re, ex natura rei: quod non oportet semper intellectum movere, modo ipsum possit terminare.” *Ibid.*, 6: “Formalitas ergo hoc modo sumpta, competit omnibus entibus conceptibilibus per se, & non eis quae sunt cum alio conceptibilia: ut sunt praedicti modi qui coincidunt in eundem conceptum formalem rei, cuius sunt modi: ita quod sicut non habent realitatem & quidditatem, praeter realitatem & quidditatem rei quam insequuntur, sic etiam non habent aliam formalitatem.” *Ibid.*, 7: “Sed ratio obiectiva est ipsum obiectum, quod obiicitur potentiae ratiocinativae, & attingitur per actum ipsius potentiae. Quia ergo formalitas est obiectum intellectus, quod attingitur per actum ipsius, appellatur ratio obiectiva, sicut omne quod est per se conceptibile.” *Ibid.*, 8: “Additur in descriptione formalitatis, quod non oportet formalitatem semper movere intellectum, modo ipsum terminet. Duae enim sunt obiecti rationes, una movendi, & altera terminandi actum ipsius potentiae.” This explication of Antonius Andreae’s influential definition of *formalitas* is an important aspect of the reception of Antonius’s thought in the sixteenth century and should be added to the broad picture of this reception as described by RAMIS BARCELÓ 2022. MARRONE 2006, 21–46, 76, 107–116, extensively quotes from Du Douet’s first chapter (partially along with parallel formulations in Trombetta), but does not seem to be aware his chapter is in fact an elaboration on Antonius’s classical definition; note, however, that Du Douet may not be aware of this

one Du Douet employs when discussing the object of the human intellect (in the last passage quoted above). To sum up, then, Du Douet's science of formalities is about supertranscendental being, encompassing the scope of metaphysics in its subject matter, and corresponding to the adequate terminating object of the human intellect.

4. Dismissive Reactions to Du Douet's Proposal Despite Formalities in the Curriculum

Intriguing as Du Douet's conception of a separate *scientia formalitatum* is, it appears to have only met with rejection. French Observant Franciscan François Leroy († 1626) authored a work, published at Paris in 1603, very similar to that of Du Douet, who is mentioned, indeed praised for his erudition, in the title of the work:⁶⁶ *Formalitatum seu plurium scientiarum metaphysico coeuntium ordine scita commistio; tum ex Doctore subtili, tum ex Aristotele, aliisque clarissimis, & lectissimis Scoti sequacibus confecta, & reficta: atque methodo instructa, institutaque eleganti; primo quidem a summae eruditionis Doctore Hono. M.N. Ioanne du Douet Dinannico minore: tum rursus alio donata stylo, statu, studioque.*

Leroy thus clearly sees himself in a line of continuity with Du Douet. Leroy's work is most likely intended as a replacement of the latter's Formalist treatise as a textbook on Formalities in French Franciscan education. Despite all similarities, Leroy's work does display some features that set it apart from

either.

⁶⁶ For basic information on Leroy, see SCHMUTZ 2008, 395, 449, 463, and (in particular) 467. Note, however, that Schmutz's presentation of Leroy's work as simply a new edition of Du Douet's work is mistaken (*ibid.*, 407, 463, 467). Schmutz's brief summary of the content and structure of Du Douet's work in point of fact concerns that of Leroy (*ibid.*, 408). For Leroy's reaction to Du Douet's conception of a separate science of formalities, see also ANDERSEN 2016, 665.

that of Du Douet. The work comprises 365 numbered octavo folios (730 pages), and so is much longer than Du Douet's work. Like the latter, Leroy's work is divided into three books, but their content is distributed quite differently. The short first book explains a few basic concepts ('*formalitas*' and '*quidditas*') and then discusses various epistemological matters.⁶⁷ The long second book presents the core teachings of Scoto-Formalist metaphysics: the concept of being, the intrinsic modes, the transcendentals, and the divisions of being, notably subsuming the entire doctrine of the seven distinctions under the *divisio entis* of sameness and difference (*idem – diversum*). All Formalist issues pertaining to logic, e.g., various kinds of predication, are relegated to the short third book. With this new, presumably more pedagogical, arrangement of matters already discussed by Du Douet, the seven distinctions occupy a much less prominent place in the work (a subsection of a chapter rather than an entire book), which in turn makes the connection with classical Formalist literature less apparent. On the other hand, exactly with this manoeuvre, Leroy's arrangement foreshadows a tendency in seventeenth-century Scotism, where the Formalist doctrine of distinctions is typically, if not always, treated under the division of being into sameness and difference, as seen, e.g., in Bartolomeo Mastri's metaphysics as well as in Scotists under his influence.⁶⁸ For a comparison of the content and structure of Du Douet's and Leroy's works, see Appendix 1 to this present article.

For our purposes, the most significant divergence from Du Douet, however, concerns Leroy's view of the scientific status of Formalism. The shift is signalled in the very title of Leroy's work, where we find talk of some "mixture" (*commistio*) of matters discussed in other sciences. In his prefatory first chapter, Leroy explicitly, and without doubt directed against Du Douet, ex-

⁶⁷ LEROY 1603, lib. I, cap. 2, 2r–5r, basically summarises Du Douet's chapter on *formalitas*.

⁶⁸ See ANDERSEN 2016, 679–680.

plains that Formalism – or whatever is treated in Formalist literature – does not constitute a separate *scientia* and, hence, does not even have a name of its own. This literature rather treats matters otherwise discussed in logic, physics, metaphysics, and theology. It would thus be in vain to try to make out one particular subject matter of Leroy’s book, as he himself states. The purpose of his book is not to discuss any one particular science, but rather to make Scotism accessible to students. Metaphysics, though, and here Leroy agrees with Du Douet (even borrowing his expressions), is of special relevance. Since Formalist literature in particular considers “the divisions, distinctions, and identities of being,” it may indeed be seen as a special kind of metaphysics.⁶⁹ Somewhat surprisingly, Leroy has nothing to say about the most original part of Du Douet’s proposal, namely his tying the science of formalities to a consideration of supertranscendental being. Maximally transcendent being is not even touched upon in Leroy’s discussions of the object of the human intellect or of the univocity of the concept of being. One has the impression that he for some reason deliberately avoids this intricate topic, perhaps because Du Douet’s insistence that his science of formalities has an equivocal subject matter was regarded as overly strange, or else because Leroy thought the topic was too subtle for young students, his primary audience.

We find a by-and-large similar reaction to Du Douet’s proposal in the Italian Observant Franciscan Francesco Pitigiani d’Arezzo’s (Arretinus; ca.

⁶⁹ LEROY 1603, lib. I, cap. 1, 1v-2r: “[I]n nostris formalitatum qui in lucem emittuntur libellis, non distinctam aliquam, & peculiarem proponi scientiam, neque hunc libellum scientiae nomine appellandum esse, sed verius dici collectanea quaedam rerum Logicarum, Physicarum, Metaphys. & Theologicarum. Inferri inde potest non esse quaerendum determinatum aliquod huius operis subiectum, cum per varias, ut dictum est, excurret scientias, ut faciliorem ad intellectum doctrinae Scoticae sternat viam. Speciali tamen iure hoc opus sibi vendicat Metaphysica, quia divisiones, distinctiones, & identitates entis prae caeteris accurate discutit, quae omnia Metaphys. considerationis esse qui dubitet arbitrator esse neminem.”

1553–1616) commentary on Sirect’s Formalist treatise.⁷⁰ With its 339 numbered quarto folios (678 pages), Pitigiani’s commentary is, to my knowledge, the most comprehensive piece of Formalist literature that has come down to us from the entire Scotist tradition (Leroy’s book has more pages, but the format is *in octavo*). In contrast to both Du Douet and Leroy, Pitigiani was not only a prolific Scotist in both philosophy and theology, but also held high office in his order (Provincial Minister of Tuscany) and had important connections in local and ecclesiastic politics (the Grand Duke of Tuscany Ferdinand I and the Gonzaga family of Mantua are among his connections). The full title of this work, published in Venice in 1606, reads: *Expositio exactissima, atque absolutissima identitatum, et distinctionum (quas Formalitates vocant) M. Antonii Sirecti Doct. Paris. secundum doctrinam Doct. Subtilis Scoti, subtilium omnium Principis: in qua difficultates quamplurimae, & controversiae, quae inter Scotistas versantur, facillime resolutissimeque explicantur.*

Pitigiani’s work closely follows the structure of Sirect’s treatise. Before he starts commenting on Sirect, though, he has an introductory section similar to the opening chapters of the treatises by Du Douet and Leroy. As they do, Pitigiani there provides his opinion about the scientific status of Formalism. He says the object of the science he is treating is “being in respect to identity and distinction or under the aspect of identity and diversity” (*ens in ordine ad identitatem et distinctionem, vel sub ratione identitatis et diversitatis*). This science is in fact just one part of metaphysics, and its object correspondingly is one part of the object of metaphysics, i.e., “being as being” (*ens quatenus ens*). To the objection that “being in respect to identity and distinction” is something complex

⁷⁰ Basic info on Pitigiani in SBARAGLIA 1806, 279. Pitigiani’s biography is rather complex; in addition to being a Scotist philosopher and theologian, he was also an influential legist – and himself accused in a case of sexual abuse; for these aspects of his life, see LAGIOIA 2017, 88–95. For Pitigiani’s reaction to Du Douet’s conception of a separate science of formalities, see also ANDERSEN 2016, 664–665.

and therefore cannot be the object of any science, Pitigiani responds that it represents something incomplex.⁷¹ This response is an indication that Pitigiani is familiar with Du Douet's discussion of a separate *scientia formalitatum* (recall that Du Douet said that the complex term '*ens transcendentissime sumptum*' represented something incomplex in the mind). Though he does not explicitly reject Du Douet's proposal, it is clear from his adoption of Formalist matters into metaphysics (despite writing a long Formalist treatise rather than an exposition of metaphysics) that he is not in favour of Du Douet's solution. Pitigiani's introductory section includes a consideration of the concept '*formalitas*,' but he does not link this concept with his view of the subject matter of Formalism.⁷² Only at a later place, in the course of his commentary, does he discuss the various elements of Antonius Andreae's definition (notably, Antonius Andreae is referenced, but not as the author of the definition of *formalitas*).⁷³ Likewise, Pitigiani does not discuss supertranscendent being in his introductory section, but rather only later in his commentary and without linking this motif with the scientific status of Formalism.⁷⁴

71 ARRETINUS 1606, prol., 1v: "Et si quaeratur quid sit huius scientiae obiectum, licet ab aliquibus ponatur hoc disiunctum idem, vel diversum, & ab aliis formalitas: Nos tamen huius scientiae obiectum ponimus ens in ordine ad identitatem, & distinctionem, vel sub ratione identitatis, & diversitatis. Nam cum haec quaestio sit Metaphysica, & idem sit totius, & partis obiectum: Metaphysicae autem obiectum primum sit ens quatenus ens, erit etiam huius partis obiectum ipsummet ens sub ratione (ut diximus) identitatis, ac diversitatis, & licet idem, & diversum sit quoddam complexum, & ratio formalis obiecti debeat esse incomplexa; hoc nihil est; quia per hoc complexum circumloquimur aliquod incomplexum, sicut per corpus animatum circumloquimur aliquod genus innominatum." The one work from the Formalist tradition that resembles Pitigiani's work the most is VALLONUS 1566 (first printed 1533). Giovanni Vallone's work too is structured as a commentary on Sirect (and includes passages from Sirect's treatise). Contrary to Pitigiani, Leroy, and Du Douet, Vallone does not have an introductory section for general considerations about Formalism. For some observations on Vallone's work, see PERRONE 1985, 35–42.

72 ARRETINUS 1606, prol., 1v.

73 ARRETINUS 1606, 157v–159r. Antonius Andreae is referenced only for the view that privations and negations are formalities.

74 ARRETINUS 1606, 86r–87v. One further author who explicitly addresses the question of the subject matter of Formalism is the Italian Conventual Franciscan Giovanni Battista

Although Du Douet's proposal clearly was not successful and was rejected by authors even within his own tradition, his proposal may still be seen as *de facto* representing the teaching situation at the time, at least among the Franciscans. Marco Forlivesi, examining the educational policies among Conventual Franciscans in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, has shown that in the third year of their higher education, after having studied logic for two years and before studying natural philosophy and metaphysics, students attended classes on "universals" and "formalities" according to Duns Scotus. For this particular class, no specific textbooks are mentioned in the documents referenced by Forlivesi regarding education in Conventual schools.⁷⁵ The collective work *Gymnasium speculativum*, a syllabus with teaching materials, repeatedly published at Paris by the Observant Franciscan Augustinus Gothutius in the first decade of the seventeenth century, fills this lacuna. The (to my knowledge) first edition of the syllabus (1604) contains the entire *Tractatus de formalitatibus brevis, facilis, et necessarius in Scoti Formalitates* by the Conventual Franciscan Filippo Fabri (1564–1630), Scotist metaphysician and theologian at Padua.⁷⁶ The treatise was first published in 1602 as an appendix to Fabri's *Philosophia naturalis Ioannis Duns Scoti, ex quatuor libris Sententiarum et quodlibetis collecta* and reprinted in this work's later editions.⁷⁷ Notably, Fabri himself explicitly announced his disinterest in

Chiodini; see CHIODINUS 1617, 79. The work appears to have many similarities with those of Du Douet and Leroy. I have not yet been able to examine the work in any detail. I am grateful to Sylvain Roudaut for directing my attention to this work.

75 FORLIVESI 2015, 260 and 311, referencing Filippo Gesualdi's transitional regulations of education among the Conventuals (1594), the Viterbo general chapter's decrees on this subject (1596), and the *Constitutiones urbanae* of 1628.

76 FABER FAVENTINUS 1604. This edition has the appearance of a separately published work. It is however included in the list of contents on the title page of GOTHUTIUS 1604. Gothutius has enhanced Fabri's treatise by including some additional material; see FABER FAVENTINUS 1604, 67–81.

77 FABER FAVENTINUS 1602. For the editions of this treatise, and the work it was attached to, see ANDERSEN 2016, 870; see further the scattered remarks at *ibid.*, 662, 667, 691. The editions of 1606, 1616, and 1622 have two new chapters added at the end of the treatise.

the issue of the subject matter of Formalism and the definition of ‘formality,’ calling these questions “of no avail” (*quae omnia vanitates sunt*).⁷⁸ With this announcement and with the emphasis, in the title, of his treatise’s brevity, Fabri not only distances himself from Du Douet’s very discussion of the subject matter of Formalism, but also from the tendency toward ever more comprehensive treatments of Formalist matters. Fabri is cutting Formalism down to size. Unsurprisingly, he subscribes to the reductionist approach advocated by Brulefer more than a century earlier (though without mentioning Brulefer).⁷⁹

For subsequent editions (1605 and 1607), Augustinus Gothutius reworked his syllabus. Fabri’s treatise was replaced by two classics of the Formalist tradition, Antoine Sirect’s and Étienne Brulefer’s treatises. They were accompanied by Maurice of Port’s opuscle on distinctions, the *Grammatica speculativa* (here still ascribed to Duns Scotus), and Cardinal Constanzo Sarnano’s treatise *De primis ac secundis intentionibus*. These editions are, to my knowledge, the latest prints of the Formalist treatises of Sirect, Brulefer, and Maurice of Port. The list of contents of the volume corresponds with a study programme organised into five classes.

The first class is devoted to logic, the second to natural philosophy, the third to Formalism, the fourth to metaphysics, and the fifth to theology.⁸⁰ For

Fabri there presents Agostino Nifo’s objections to the formal distinction and subsequently replies to these objections; see FABER FAVENTINUS 1606, *Tractatus*, cap. 10–11, 738a–742b. For Fabri’s view of being as a *formalitas*, as expressed in his posthumously published commentary on Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* (1637), see FORLIVESI 2018, 72–74.

78 As already noted by POPPI 1966, 711; see FABER FAVENTINUS 1602, *Tractatus*, cap. 1, 690a. The treatise ends on a similar note, stressing the uselessness of many issues debated among the Formalists; see *ibid.*, 710b: “Multa alia dicta a diversis in illis formalitatibus possunt revocari in dubium: sed quia sunt parvae utilitatis, & brevitatis iuvat intelligentiam hic finem impono.”

79 FABER FAVENTINUS 1602, *Tractatus*, cap. 9, 709a–710b.

80 GOTHUTIUS 1605 and GOTHUTIUS 1607, unpaginated front matter *40 (apart from the year of printing indicated on the title page, the editions of 1605 and 1607 are identical, in contrast to the 1604 edition). Teaching materials for the class on Formalism are found at 787–962. The volume, in these two editions, has a total of 1112 counted octavo pages.

the full list of contents of the volume, and the teaching materials allocated to each class, see Appendix 2 to this present article. The various editions of Gothutius's syllabus witness that Formalism, at least among Franciscans in the first decade of the sixteenth century, constituted a discipline of its own, regardless of whether individual authors subscribed to the idea of a separate *scientia formalitatum*. Further material may be adduced to corroborate this impression. One last example I wish to mention is the small Formalist pamphlet *In Scoti formalitates absolutissima syntaxis* by the Conventual Franciscan Simon Thomazzetus (Rome 1591). With its extensive use of diagrams, this brief work of just 27 pages stands out from all other Formalist literature.⁸¹ The seven kinds of distinctions (and the modal distinction) and their corresponding kinds of identities, and related matters, are thus analysed in a series of diagrams. This pedagogical presentation of the Formalist core doctrine clearly testifies to the classroom relevance of Formalist literature toward the end of the sixteenth century. The main diagram, showing all of the Formalist distinctions and identities, is included as Appendix 3 to this present article.

Conclusion

I began this article by quoting Wolfgang Hübener's statement regarding the highly branched diffusion of the Formalist tradition in the Early Modern period. In section 1, we saw how this tradition, in the early fourteenth century, was born out of Francis of Meyronnes's and Petrus Thomae's innovative reconsiderations of the multiplicity of kinds of distinctions in the wake of Duns

HÜBENER 1987, 331, mentions the 1607 edition. I am not aware of any further editions than the three editions to which I refer in this article.

81 THOMAZZETUS 1591. In his dedicatory letter, the author emphasises the brevity and clarity of his work. The only authors named in this work are Duns Scotus, Aristotle, Averroes, and Thomas Aquinas; the latter two are said to hold the formal distinction; see *ibid.*, 21.

Scotus's teaching on the formal distinction. In section 2, we saw how this tradition indeed developed from being a Franciscan affair to becoming, from the decades up to 1500 and onwards, a much broader phenomenon, a subject common to several scholastic schools. Section 3 highlighted how one Scotist philosopher, Jean Du Douet, conceived of Formalism as a discipline in its own right, a proper *scientia formalitatum* with its own subject matter and place among the sciences. Section 4, alas, showed how little success this idea had (namely none), but also that Formalism *de facto*, at least in Franciscan milieus, constituted a discipline taught in special classes and hence certainly was one distinct discipline in the curriculum of scholastic disciplines.

Philosophically speaking, the Formalist tradition, with its subtle analyses of a multiplicity of kinds of distinctions and identities, was a seedbed of metaphysical innovation, and it was so over a long period of time. Historically speaking, it was indeed an important link – in the standard historiography of philosophy a *missing* link – between Late-Medieval and Post-Medieval scholastic metaphysics. If the link now has become less missing, then this article has fulfilled its purpose.

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Appendix 1

Comparison of the Contents of Jean Du Douet's *Formalitarum monotessera* and François Leroy's *Formalitarum commistio*

The number of chapters is identical in the Paris (1579) and Venice (1587) editions of Du Douet's work. The work is divided into three books that are again subdivided into chapters with each their own heading. In neither of the two editions do we find a separate list of chapters (instead, both editions have an alphabetically ordered index of topics). Leroy's work, printed only in one edition (Paris 1603), is structured in a similar way, with three books that are subdivided into chapters; in Leroy's work, though, some chapters are further subdivided into sections, some of which carry a heading of their own, while others do not. This leaves on the reader a rather disorganised impression. Leroy's work also lacks a separate list of contents. To facilitate a comparison of these two Parisian textbooks on formalities, the contents have here been collected into one synoptical table. Orthography and interpunctuation have only been slightly standardised.

Jean Du Douet <i>Formalitarum monotessera</i>	François Leroy <i>Formalitarum commistio</i>
Formalitarum Doctoris Subtilis Scoti, Ant. Sirecti, Ant. Trombetae, et Steph. Brulliferi, eximiorum Theologorum, ordinis minorum, Monotessera in philosophiae Aristotelis et Theologiae theoricæ studiosorum gratiam adunata, lib. 1. Praefatio Caput 1. De diffinitione formalitatis & multiplici acceptione nominis formalitatis.	Liber primus formalitarum. Caput 1. An tribus sequentibus definiendis tractatibus scientiae nomen accomodetur? Sit ne eis assignandum quoddam obiectum? Quid in illis maxime tractatur? Quo ordine omnia hic contenta proponuntur? Cap. 2. Formalitas origo & definitio. Cap. 3. Qui differant quidditativum & reale, & quot modis suma-

<p>Caput 2. Quiditatis descriptio & multiplicitas.</p> <p>Caput 3. De subiecto scientiae formalitatum.</p> <p>Caput 4. Scientiam formalitatum praecipue esse metaphisicam & de subiecto metaphisicae.</p> <p>Caput 5. De subiecto nostri intellectus.</p> <p>Caput 6. Intellectus duplex agens et patiens, & quomodo eorum debeant intelligi descriptiones, & quot modis uterque dicatur, nec non cui convenient.</p> <p>Caput 7. Triplicem esse actum intellectus.</p> <p>Caput 8. In divinis propositiones esse absolutorum & relativorum praedicatorum quae sint absolutae, & respectivae, & quod habeant acceptiones.</p> <p>Caput 9. De modis dicendi per se, & de modis dicendi per accidens.</p> <p>Caput 10. De ente per accidens nihil dicitur, nec de conceptu per accidens, neque de ratione in se falsa, aut impossibili.</p> <p>Caput 11. De divisionibus propositionum in sua membra, & de divisione eorundem membrorum in partes suas minus communes.</p> <p>Caput 12. De praedicatione exercitata formali, & essentiali & denominativa.</p> <p>Caput 13. De praedicatione substantiali.</p>	<p>tur quidditativum.</p> <p>Cap. 4. De intellectu.</p> <p>Cap. 5. De obiecto nostri intellectus.</p> <p>Cap. 6. De triplici intellectus actu, eiusque conceptu.</p> <p>Cap. 7. De abstractione varia & multiplici, atque abstractiva, & intuitiva, aliarumque cognitione.</p> <p>Capitis sectio unica.</p>
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Caput 14. De praedicatione identica, & generaliter per transennem de abstractione.

Caput 15. De abstractione, & eius speciebus.

Caput 16. De praedicatione signata, & de secundis intentionibus unde ortae sint.

Caput 17. Modi prioris in genere & in speciali, de prioritatibus temporis, honoris & causae.

Caput 18. De prioritate naturae.

Caput 19. Prioritatem naturae non esse tantum praesuppositionem unius ab altero.

Caput 20. Ordo naturae multiplex.

Caput 21. De prioritate originis.

Caput 22. De prioritate perfectionis.

Caput 23. De prioritate generationis

Caput 24. De prioritate durationis, & quotuplex sit duratio.

Caput 25. Quid sit modus intrinsecus.

Caput 26. Modus intrinsecus ab omni quiditate diversus.

Caput 27. Modus intrinsecus non est idem formaliter positive suae quiditati, nec ab ea formaliter positive distinguitur.

Caput 28. Plura obijciuntur sophismata contra praedicta, sed duo praecipue egent explicatione, quae proponuntur cum resolutionibus eorum.

<p>Caput 29. Qui sint modi intrinseci divinae essentiae.</p> <p>Caput 30. Differentiae quae sint inter modos intrinsecos, & differentias formales.</p> <p>Caput 31. Obiectio contra praedicta, & de multiplici potentia.</p> <p>Caput 32. De cognitione intuitiva et abstractiva.</p>	
<p>Formalitatum monotesserae liber secundus, qui est de univocatione, & divisionibus entis.</p> <p>Praefatio.</p> <p>Caput 1. Ens est univocum.</p> <p>Caput 2. Univocum & aequivocum sunt immediata.</p> <p>Caput 3. Obiectiones contra entis univocationem, ad quarum solutionem probatur ex propriis verbis Aristotelis & Averrois, ens esse univocum.</p> <p>Caput 4. Aliae obiectiones, contra eandem entis univocationem, pro quarum solutione ponitur univocatio duplex transcendens & limitata.</p> <p>Caput 5. Aptitudo esse potest sine potentia.</p> <p>Caput 6. Divisio entis transcendentissime sumpti, in ens reale & rationis.</p> <p>Caput 7. Ens dividitur in absolutum & respectivum.</p> <p>Caput 8. Ens dicitur quiditative de absoluto & respectivo.</p> <p>Caput 9. Ens quiditative praedica-</p>	<p>Ad secundum librum praefatio.</p> <p>Caput 1. De ente in genere.</p> <p>Cap. 2. De modis intrinsecis.</p> <p>Cap. 3. De modis intrinsecis divinae essentiae.</p> <p>Cap. 4. Argumenta entis univocationem impugnantia.</p> <p>Cap. 5. Responsiones ad argumenta proxime adducta.</p> <p>Cap. 6. Ens reale univocum esse asseritur.</p> <p>Sectio capitis prima.</p> <p>Capitis altera sectio.</p> <p>Cap. 7. De disiunctis entis proprietatibus uno, bono, vero.</p> <p>Capitis prima sectio.</p> <p>Capitis secunda sectio.</p> <p>Capitis sectio tertia.</p> <p>Cap. 8. De complexi entis proprietatibus, ac primo entis longe, lateque pervagati in reale, & ratione sectione.</p> <p>Capitis prima sectio.</p> <p>Capitis sectio altera.</p> <p>Cap. 9. Ens quidem reale in quan-</p>

<p>tur de materia & forma.</p> <p>Caput 10. Materia esse potest sine forma.</p> <p>Caput 11. Ens reale dividitur in quantum & non quantum.</p> <p>Caput 12. Ens quantum dividitur per finitum & infinitum.</p> <p>Caput 13. Quantum dividitur in unum, & multa.</p> <p>Caput 14. Unitas multiplex.</p> <p>Caput 15. Ens dividitur in ens causabile & incausabile.</p> <p>Caput 16. Finitum dividitur in substantiam & accidens.</p> <p>Caput 17. Res a Reor reris, & a Ratus, rata, ratum, dicitur; & ens per consequens cum synonyma sint si accipiuntur uniformiter.</p> <p>Caput 18. Ens dividitur in ens simpliciter, & in ens secundum quid.</p> <p>Caput 19. Quid sit ens in potentia, & ens in actu; & de multiplici potentia, & multiplici actu.</p> <p>Caput 20. Ens reale totum iterum dividitur in simplex & compositum.</p> <p>Caput 21. Simpliciter simplex.</p> <p>Caput 22. Compositio ex realitatibus potenciali, & actuali.</p> <p>Caput 23. Compositio ex re potenciali & re actuali seu ex materia & forma.</p> <p>Caput 24. Angeli non sunt corporei, qui plures in eadem specie esse possunt; quaeque ab anima</p>	<p>tum, & non quantum primo partitur.</p> <p>Capitis sectio unica.</p> <p>Cap. 10. Ens reale, iterum in absolutum, & respectivum solvitur.</p> <p>Capitis sectio unica.</p> <p>Cap. 11. Rursum, ens in unum, & multa des[ti]tuitur.</p> <p>Capitis prima sectio.</p> <p>Capitis altera sectio.</p> <p>Cap. 12. Ens rursus, & quarto in idem, ac diversum rumpitur.</p> <p>Capitis sectio prima. De identitate, & distinctione rationis.</p> <p>Huius sectionis subsectio unica.</p> <p>Capitis sectio secunda. De identitate, & distinctione ex natura rei.</p> <p>Capitis sectio tertia. De identitate, & distinctione formali.</p> <p>Capitis sectio quarta. De identitate, & distinctione reali.</p> <p>Huius sectionis subsectio.</p> <p>Capitis sectio quinta. De identitate, & distinctione essentiali.</p> <p>Huius sectionis subsectio.</p> <p>Capitis sectio sexta. De identitate, & distinctione subiectiva.</p> <p>Capitis sectio septima. De identitate, & distinctione obiectiva.</p> <p>Huius sectionis subsectio.</p> <p>Capitis sectio postrema. De numero identitatum, & distinctionum.</p> <p>Cap. 13. Denuo & quinto, ens reale in simplex & compositum disseca-</p>
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<p>specie differunt.</p> <p>Caput 25. Quomodo Beatus Augustinus dixerit, Angelos esse corporeos.</p> <p>Caput 26. Angeli corpora assumere possunt, & qualia: Et quae in eis opera exercere possunt.</p> <p>Caput 27. Caeli a propria forma non ab intelligentis moventur.</p> <p>Caput 28. Compositio ex 4. qualitatibus primis & simplicitas ei opposita.</p> <p>Caput 29. Compositio sit ex hijs & cum hijs.</p> <p>Caput 30. Ens necessarium, & contingens: Necessarium duplex, & contingens duplex.</p> <p>Caput 31. Necessarium ex se & a se, & ex se, & ab alio apud Philosophos & Theologos.</p> <p>Caput 32. Secunda intelligentia habet esse effective a Deo.</p> <p>Caput 33. Filius divinus Theologis est necessarius quam Philosophis secundae intelligentiae.</p> <p>Caput 34. Ens dependens & independens.</p> <p>Caput 35. Omnia sunt ad aliquid denominative, & quae sint dependentia essentialis & accidentaria.</p>	<p>tur.</p> <p>Capitis prima sectio.</p> <p>Capitis sectio secunda.</p> <p>Capitis tertia sectio.</p> <p>Capitis sectio quarta. Multiplex formalitatum compositionis genus.</p> <p>Capitis sectio quinta.</p> <p>Capitis sectio sexta. Tertium & quartum componendi genus hic expeditur.</p> <p>Capitis sectio septima. Compositio alia duplex cum his & ex his.</p> <p>Capitis sectio octava. Quatuor elementarium qualitatuum compositio, seu mixtio, atque ei opposita simplicitas.</p> <p>Capitis sectio nona. Totum a partibus reipsa distinguitur.</p> <p>Huius sectionis prima subsectio. In contrariam partem argumenta, quibus totum a partibus reipsa distinguit fit probabile.</p> <p>Huius sectionis secunda subsectio. Argumentorum explicatio, quibus suadebatur totum a suis partibus reipsa non differre.</p> <p>Cap. 14. Deinde, & sexto in finitum & infinitum ens reale dispartitur.</p> <p>Capitis prima sectio.</p> <p>Capitis secunda sectio. In substantiam & accidens finitum ens dispartitur.</p>
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	<p>Capitis sectio prima.⁸²</p> <p>Capitis secunda sectio.</p> <p>Capitis tertia sectio. De naturis universis, & communibus.</p> <p>Huius sectionis quarta.⁸³</p> <p>Capitis sectio quarta. De accidente.</p> <p>Cap. 15. Ens reale denique ac septimo in prius & posterius effunditur.</p> <p>Capitis sectio prima.</p> <p>Capitis sectio secunda. De prioritate naturae.</p> <p>Huius sectionis subsectio.</p> <p>Capitis sectio tertia. De prioritate originis.</p> <p>Huius sectionis subsectio.</p> <p>Capitis sectio quarta. De reliquis prioritatum generibus Generationis, Honoris, Perfectionis & Ordinis universe.</p> <p>Cap. 16. Denique & octavo idem reale ens in dependens & [in]dependens spoliatur.</p> <p>Capitis sectio prima. De causis omnibus.</p> <p>Capitis secunda sectio.</p> <p>Cap. 17. Ens reale nono & ultimo in contingens & necessarium distribuitur.</p> <p>Capitis prima sectio.</p> <p>Capitis sectio secunda. Necessarium ex se & a se, & ex se & ab alio</p>
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⁸² This and the following section are wrongly titled *subsections* of chapter 14's second section.

⁸³ This heading stands for a subsection of the third section.

	quid sit apud Theologos et Philosophos.
<p>Formalitatum monotesserae liber tertius, qui de identitatibus & distinctionibus inscribitur.</p> <p>Praefatio.</p> <p>Caput 1. Unitas multiplex.</p> <p>Caput 2. Res multipliciter dicitur.</p> <p>Caput 3. Contradictio est distinctionis proximum fundamentum.</p> <p>Caput 4. De identitate rationis.</p> <p>Caput 5. De distinctione rationis.</p> <p>Caput 6. Duplex distinctio rationis.</p> <p>Caput 7. Quomodo investigetur distinctio rationis.</p> <p>Caput 8. De identitate ex natura rei.</p> <p>Caput 9. De distinctione ex natura rei.</p> <p>Caput 10. Totum multiplex, & quomodo distinguatur a partibus componentibus.</p> <p>Caput 11. Obiectiones contra praedicta, & earum notabiles solutiones.</p> <p>Caput 12. Aristotelem hanc distinctionem ex natura rei cognovisse, probatur ex verbis ipsius.</p> <p>Caput 13. De rationibus investigandae distinctionis istius ex natura rei.</p> <p>Caput 14. De identitate formali.</p> <p>Caput 15. De distinctione formali.</p>	<p>Libris tertiis formalitatum, qui de enuntiationibus instituitur praefatio.</p> <p>Caput 1. De nomine.</p> <p>Cap. 2. De verbo.</p> <p>Cap. 3. De oratione & enuntiatione.</p> <p>Cap. 4. De speciebus enuntiationis, quae ad substantiam, quantitatem & qualitatem quoad rem videtur attinere.</p> <p>Cap. 5. De reliquis enuntiationum speciebus, quae ad modum substantiae attinere videntur ac primum de quidditativa, essentiali, substantiali, & identica.</p> <p>Cap. quinti unica sectio. De substantiali & identica enuntiatione.</p> <p>Cap. 6. De enuntiationibus ad modum qualitatis spectantibus Qualitativa, Formali, Denominativa & Modali incidenter.</p> <p>Huius cap. sectio unica. De enuntiationibus modorum.</p> <p>Cap. 7. De enuntiationibus, utriusque communibus Necessaria, Impossibili & Contingente, Signata & Exercita, atque Univoca & Aequivoca.</p> <p>Cap. 8. De quatuor per se, totidemque per accidens dicendi modis.</p> <p>Cap. 9. De ente per accidens, nihil est quod dicatur, nihilque de con-</p>

<p>Caput 16. Essentia divina est ex se singularissima.</p> <p>Caput 17. Quomodo distinguantur concretum & abstractum.</p> <p>Caput 18. Rationis 5. investigandae distinctionis formalis.</p> <p>Caput 19. Unde sumantur identitas, & distinctio realis.</p> <p>Caput 20. Identitas realis.</p> <p>Caput 21. Illa quae sunt in potentia obiectiva, nec sunt eadem realiter, nec distinguuntur.</p> <p>Caput 22. De distinctione reali.</p> <p>Caput 23. De identitate essentiali.</p> <p>Caput 24. De distinctione essentiali.</p> <p>Caput 25. De identitate & distinctione⁸⁴ subiectiva.</p> <p>Caput 26. Alius modus identitatis & distinctionis subiectivae.</p> <p>Caput 27. De identitate & distinctione obiectiva.</p> <p>Caput 28. De illatione identitatis unius ex alia.</p> <p>Caput 29. De illatione unius distinctionis ex alia.</p> <p>Caput 30. Solutiones quarundam obiectionum, quae fieri solent contra identitatum & distinctionum numerum assignatum.</p>	<p>ceptu per Accidens, nec denique de ratione in se falsa, aut impossibili.</p> <p>Cap. decimum ac ultimum. De syllogismo expository, cuius est usus in formalitatibus.</p>
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84 Both editions wrongly have 'distinctionis.'

Appendix 2

List of Contents in Augustinus Gothutius (ed.), *Gymnasium speculativum* (identical in the editions 1605 and 1607)

The list of contents is organised according to a study programme of five classes. The copy of the 1605 edition here used is from, and has been digitised by, the Staats- und Stadtbibliothek, Augsburg. Shelf number Enc 1249. URL: <https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/view/bsb11246163?page=40> (accessed 15 March 2024).

CATALOGVS DOCTORVM, QVI IN
Quinque huius Gymnasij Classibus Doctissime,
et Subtilissime differunt.

	FONTANVS, DE DIALECTICIS Prodidagmatis, & Terminis Philosophicis.
	IVDOCVS CLICHTOVÆVS, de Terminorū Explanacione, & Scientiarū Diuisione.
IN CLASSE Logicatorum differit.	PETRVS HISPANVS, de Logica Arist.
	F. AVGVSTINVS GOTHVTIVS, de Quinque Vniuersalib. Porphyrij pro formalib.
	TITELM. de MODO definiēdi, et diuidēdi
	PETRVS TATARETVS, de Duobus Libris Posteriorum Analyticorum Aristotelis.
	AVGVSTINVS HVNÆVS, de apte instituenda Disputatione, deque Vocū diuisionib.
IN CLASSE Physicorum differit.	PETRVS TATARETVS, de Tota Naturali Philosophia Aristotelis, vnā cum Tabula vniuersæ Philosophiæ Auctoris Gymnasij.
IN CLASSE Metaphysicorum, & Mathematicorum differit.	PETRVS TATARETVS, de Sex Libris Metaphysicorum Aristotelis.
	NICOLAVS DE ORBELLIS, de Duodecim Libris Metaphysicorum Aristotelis, & de Mathematica compendiosè, & dilucidè.
IN CLASSE Formalistarū, seu Scotistarum differit.	F. ANTONIVS SIRECTVS, } de Forma
	F. STEPHANVS BRVLIFER, } litatibus
	F. MAVRITIVS HYBERN. } Scoti.
	F. IOANNES SCOTVS, de Grammatica Speculatiua.
	CARDINALIS SARNANVS, de Primis, ac Secundis Intentionibus.
IN CLASSE Theologorum differit.	SANCTVS BONAVENTVRA, de Terminis Theologicis.
	F. IO. SCOTVS, de Definitionib. Theolog.
	F. FRANCISCVS DE MAYRONIS, de Explanacione Terminorum Theologalium.
	ARNOLDVS VESALIENSIS, de Quatuor Libris Magistri Sententiarum.
	PRIMA CLASSIS

Appendix 3

Diagram from Simon Thomazzetus's *In Scoti formalitates absolutissima syntaxis*

Double page diagram giving an overview of all the kinds of distinctions and identities. The copy here used is from, and has been digitised by, the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich. Shelf number Ph.sp. 841. URL: <https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/view/bsb00033089?page=14,15> (accessed 15 March 2024).



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